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ADMINISTRATIVE MEMO NO. 4

September 24, 1942

TO OFFICERS OF THE FBIS:

As a result of our staff discussion I am defining below as clearly as possible the existing Governmental regulations and Service policy regarding outside activities of members of the staff in speaking, writing, etc.

(1) Mr. Jack Fleming, Director of the Bureau of Publications and Graphics in OWI, is responsible for clearing all speeches made by directors of Federal agencies. This applies to speeches made by the Director of FBIS. Because of the burden of work involved in such clearance, the arrangement has further been made that the director of each agency shall be responsible for speeches made by any member of his staff. This means that I, as Director, am obliged to act as clearance officer for any public address made by an FBIS staff member.

(2) The Foreign Service Division Press Bureau of OWI is responsible for clearance and suggestion of all articles dealing with the war, especially those articles prepared by Federal officers. The Director of FBIS similarly has delegated to him the task of clearing such articles written by members of the FBIS staff, and forwarding them to OWI when necessary. It is understood that articles or speeches dealing with subjects quite apart from the immediate job at hand and the events which are current, need not be cleared at all. In the matter of lectures, or any classroom work undertaken by members of the staff, there is no clearance necessary, except where there is liklihood that the usual rule of non-publication of classroom discussion or classroom lectures may be violated.

(3) The principles guiding the Director in clearing speeches or articles are as follows:

a. The provisions of the Hatch Act, which prohibit any member of the Federal services from engaging in partisan political activity.

b. The usual rule against allowing publication or public knowledge of the current confidential material which is being handled by FBIS, or the techniques used in propaganda analysis. Consideration must be given to the time element and nature of the media of publication in making decisions regarding these matters. In connection with this, no material used in any case should be identified as coming from the Federal Communications Commission, nor should persons writing articles identify themselves by their Commission title, unless it is an official sponsored statement of FBIS activities.

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c. The recent letter from the President of the United States to the heads of all agencies, asking that Federal administrative officials refrain from public disagreement with each other on matters of important national policy, but that these disagreements rather be carried on within the Governmental organization.

Unquestionably membership in an agency dealing with confidential material, at the service of other Federal agencies, especially during wartime, sharply and definitely limits the freedom of members of the staff in entering into public argument regarding important national issues. Any separate publication of material, while a member of the staff or later, also raises the ethical question of personal appropriation of the work, research and writings of the other members of the organization. This latter matter cannot be controlled except by the effect on the reputation of a person who pirates Government material for personal use.

It is assumed that all of the members of FBIS are fully occupied as to time and energy in the important war task, and engaging to any considerable extent in outside remunerative writing would inevitably raise the question of full devotion to the FBIS job. On the other hand, if such additional opportunities are possible, the Director will maintain as liberal an attitude as is consistent with the nature of our common task in allowing speeches to be made, articles to be written, and part-time teaching work to be carried on.

Finally, it would be more efficient if the Director could be informed in advance of the preparation of speeches or articles, or undertaking of teaching responsibilities, so that the question of policy might be decided before the task is undertaken.

/s/ Robert D. Leigh

Robert D. Leigh
Director
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